federal register

Friday
April 24, 1992

Part VI

Department of Education

Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals; Notice

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of proposed priority for fiscal year 1992.

SUMMARY: The Secretary proposes a priority for fiscal year 1992 under the program of Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals. The Secretary takes this action to focus Federal financial assistance on States that do not currently have projects funded under this program. The priority is intended to increase the number of States participating in this program.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 26, 1992.

ADDRESSES: All comments concerning this proposed priority should be addressed to John Nelson, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3326, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2741.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Raymond Melhoff, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3315, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2741. Telephone: (202) 732-1320. Deaf and hearing impaired individuals may call (202) 732-1352 for TDD services.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Grants under the program of Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals are authorized by title VII, part C, section 721(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The purpose of this program is to authorize grants to any designated State unit providing independent living services to older blind individuals. These grants are to support projects that provide independent living services for older blind individuals to help correct blindness or visual impairment or adjust to blindness and live more independently in the home or community. This program supports AMERICA 2000, the President's strategy for moving the Nation toward the National Education Goals, by enhancing the skills of older blind individuals to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

In fiscal year 1991, the Department funded projects in 28 States to provide independent living services for older blind individuals. Grantees are conducting a wide variety of programs and addressing a broad range of needs. Some projects have established community support networks of service providers, which include area agencies on aging and vocational rehabilitation agencies. Several projects are addressing the needs of older individuals with severe visual impairments by instituting statewide, locally managed equipment loan programs and free adaptive device servicing programs. Other examples include projects that emphasize mental health issues of visually impaired senior citizens, development of volunteer networks, or training consumers who are blind to provide services to other clients under this program.

The Secretary is interested in supporting projects in States that are not currently funded by this program. This priority would increase the number of States providing services to older blind individuals under this program.

The Secretary will announce the final priority in a notice in the **Federal Register**. The final priority will be determined by responses to this notice, available funds, and other considerations of the Department. Funding of particular projects depends on the availability of funds, the nature of the final priority, and the quality of the applications received. The publication of this proposed priority does not preclude the Secretary from proposing additional priorities, nor does it limit the Secretary to funding only this priority, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice of proposed priority does *not* solicit applications.

Priority

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) and 34 CFR 367.22, the Secretary proposes to give an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. The Secretary proposes to fund under this competition only applications that meet this absolute priority:

Projects must provide services to older blind individuals in States that do not currently have projects funded under this program.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. The objective of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism by relying on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

In accordance with the order, this document is intended to provide early notification of the Department's specific plans and actions for this program.

Invitation to Comment

Interested persons are invited to submit comments and recommendations regarding this proposed priority.

All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection, during and after the comment period, in room 3326, Mary Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Applicable Program Regulations

34 CFR part 367.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 796f.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.177A, Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals)

Dated: April 2, 1992.

Lamar Alexander,

Secretary of Education.

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